

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

March 23, 2023

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Simpson and Ranking Member Pingree,

We respectfully write to urge you to include \$280 million, as requested by the President, for the EPA's Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grant program ("Section 221") in the FY 2024 Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Section 221 grants provide a structured, effective, and strong source of federal funding to States and municipalities for the planning, design, and construction of treatment works and other measures for combined sewer overflows, sanitary sewer overflows, or stormwater management. Combined sewer overflows are a product of combined sewer systems, which serve nearly 860 municipalities across the nation. These systems are particularly common in the Northeast and Midwest, where they trigger harmful releases of partially treated or completely untreated raw sewage into local waterways when precipitation exceeds manageable levels, threatening the environment and public health.

This is a particularly urgent challenge for communities along the Merrimack River, which supplies drinking water for over 600,000 people. On average, almost 550 million gallons of sewage and untreated stormwater are released annually into the river, which runs more than 100 miles from central New Hampshire, through northeastern Massachusetts, and then out to sea. Combined sewer overflow discharges in Lowell and Manchester on average account for over 80% of the annual volume.

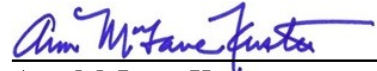
The Clean Water State Revolving Fund has been a useful tool to make improvements to the region's wastewater infrastructure. However, the scale of need to protect the Merrimack and the communities in its watershed requires a major investment of federal grant support. Indeed, according to the latest EPA Clean Water Needs Survey, nearly \$50 billion is needed. In our states alone, nearly \$1.6 billion is required.

We thank you for your consideration of this request to fully fund the Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grant program, which would allow cities with combined sewer systems, like those along the Merrimack River, to finally make the major infrastructure changes needed to prevent CSO releases.

Sincerely,



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress